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Was Howard Hunt in Dallas the day JFK died?

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Staff correspondents

WASHINGTON — A secret CIA memorandum says that E. Howard Hunt was in Dallas the day President John F. Kennedy was murdered and that top agency officials plotted to cover up Hunt's presence there.

Some CIA sources speculate that Hunt thought he was assigned by higher-ups to arrange the murder of Lee Harvey Oswald.

Sources say Hunt, convicted in the Watergate conspiracy in 1974, was acting chief of the CIA station in Mexico City in the weeks prior to the Kennedy assassination. Oswald was in Mexico City, and met with two Soviet KGB agents at the Russian Embassy there immediately before leaving for Dallas, according to the official Warren Commission report.

The 1966 secret memo, now in the hands of the House assassination committee, places Hunt in Dallas Nov. 22, 1963.

Richard M. Helms, former CIA director, and James J. Angleton, former counterintelligence chief, initialed the memo, according to investigators who made the information available to the Sunday News Journal.

According to sources close to the Select Committee on Assassination, the document reveals:

■ Three years after Kennedy's murder, and shortly after Helms and Angleton were elevated to their highest positions in the CIA, they discussed the fact that Hunt was in Dallas on the day of the assassination and that his presence there had to be kept secret.

■ Helms and Angleton thought that news of Hunt's presence in Dallas would be damaging to the agency should it leak out.

■ Helms and Angleton felt that a cover story, giving Hunt an alibi for being elsewhere the day

of the assassination, "ought to be considered."

Hunt, reached Friday at his Miami, Fla., home, denied that he was in Dallas on Nov. 22, 1963, and denied that he had been in Mexico City any time after 1961.

Hunt said that he was in Washington the day of the Kennedy murder. "I have plenty of witnesses. I took off at noon that day and went shopping and had a Chinese dinner in downtown Washington with my wife."

Hunt said he knew of no reason for such a

memo to exist. He said he had never heard of the memo's existence.

CIA sources, who have provided the assassination committee with material pertaining to Hunt's alleged presence in Dallas, say that Hunt's story about shopping in downtown Washington was a cover story concocted as a result of the memo. They say all Hunt's witnesses are CIA-arranged and that his wife cannot be questioned because she was killed in a plane crash.

The assassination committee will open hearings this fall on the Kennedy murder.

Dawn Miller, spokeswoman for the committee, said that there would be "no comment on the report of a memo. We will be holding detailed hearings in September. Because of committee rules that is all I am permitted to say."

Committee sources told the Sunday News Journal that both Helms and Angleton had been questioned by committee investigators but that the issue of the memo was not raised with either witness. Sources say Helms told the committee he could not answer specific questions on the CIA's involvement because of "an inability to remember dates."

Helms' faulty memory on ITT's involvement in Chile led to his sentencing last year on two counts of withholding information from Con-

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WALTER SCOTT'S Personality Parade

Q. For years Allen Dulles, former director of the CIA, had the reputation in spy circles of being a notorious womanizer. Was this reputation deserved?—R.D., McLean, Va.

A. Dulles, even when married, demonstrated an unflagging interest in women.